

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
UPSTAIRS AT TOWN HALL
MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2012

In attendance – Bill Johnson, Chair, Joe Oliveira, Duncan Phye, Gail Dumont, Jaime Piedrafite, Meredith Fagan and Belden Divito. Also present: Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

At 6:34 p.m. Bill Johnson called the meeting to order and noted that they were meeting to review the FY13 Budget. He asked Briggs to go over each budget as well as projected revenue and expense.

Briggs distributed the FY13 budget paperwork for review which included a summary report of both expenses and revenues, a revenue report, an expense report, and the budget summary report listing each individual department budget.

Briggs explained each report and went over the revenue amounts that would offset the different department line expenses, such as the Dispatch Regionalization with Ashby, the new officer funded by Cushing, the fees generated by the Briggs project and the solar project, and the potential revenue if the sharing of his services continues with Ashby.

He also noted the increases in the budget lines; the lieutenant position for the Police, the 3% COLA for non-union employees, the increase for Monty Tech and the AWRSD budget increase.

There was some discussion on the possible purchase of property for the DPW relocation.

Bill Johnson reviewed each department budget line and asked for comments or questions from the Board members.

Questions were as follows:

- Town Administrator – project management position? Briggs stated it was not added because it was too early to do this at this time.
- Town Accountant – salary line decrease? Briggs noted that the decrease was because the assistant position was no longer needed.
- Board of Assessors – salary line decrease? Briggs stated that the administrative assessor's hours were cut and he took away the stipends.
- Treasurer – salary decrease? Briggs stated that there was a decrease in hours.
- Tax Collector – comment on collections. Briggs noted that they have been collecting 99% of taxes which is outstanding.
- IT Expense – increase in Guardian? Briggs stated that they are working to have all departments set up with email through Guardian and they want to stabilize all IT for the Town.

- Town Clerk – when is her term done? Briggs stated that she has one year remaining as an elected official and then she would be appointed by him.
- Town Buildings – Town Hall repairs? Briggs explained what has been repaired and what needed to be done, such as the roof. He also explained what was done to repair the roof with the Reserve Fund transfer from last year. He stated that he would reach out to the Historical Commission on the complete roof repair which he was getting quotes on. He noted that the \$10,000 in this budget would go towards some small issues that need attention.
- Town Buildings – VMS? Briggs stated that the lease with the Sustainability group is up in October and that they are asking for a long term lease. He also noted that they are presently in arrears about \$10,000 and that he would be meeting with them in April to discuss this.
- Fire – IT items? Briggs stated that he would check on this. He also noted that he decreased the professional development & travel line.
- Emergency Dispatch – overtime? Briggs stated that with the Ashby regionalization the overtime could go away.
- Snow & Ice – remaining salt and sand? It was noted that this should be addressed, either by covering it or selling the excess. Briggs stated that he would check with Steve Nims. He also asked if the \$5,000 deficit under this account could be covered by a reserve fund transfer and Johnson stated that they would not have an issue doing that.
- Board of Health – Animal Inspector? Briggs stated that he contacted the Westminster agent and she is interested. He noted that he reached out to Glenn Hathaway with this information and he was waiting for a response.
- Council on Aging – salary? Briggs stated that the COA Director's salary could increase as she may be taking over the dispatch calls.
- Parks & Recreation – questions on how the funds would be used? ***It was noted that Gail Dumont left the room for this discussion.*** Briggs stated that he asked for a budget goal from the Committee to bring the parks to a better standard and this was happening. He stated that an eagle scout was working on a project at Winchester Park to repair benches and tables; the basketball court at Sweeney was being repaired and new backboards were donated by the Town of Framingham; etc. Bill Johnson noted that the budget would basically be used to fix the parks and that the work would be done by volunteers. Briggs reiterated that the budget would be used to repair and beautify both parks and that he would watch how funds were being spent. He also noted that any donations would need the approval of the Board of Selectmen. It was also noted that carnivals were not a good idea and that this would not be an issue.
- Historical Commission – Supplies account? Briggs stated that these funds would be used to purchase a few monuments and signs depicting historical sites.
- Employee Insurance Benefits – Health insurance increase? Briggs noted that the health insurance increased by 5% this year which really wasn't that significant, adding, that the Town is lucky to be a part of the group that includes Westminster and the School District, which keeps our costs down.

The supply accounts were discussed and it was decided that this would be addressed for Fiscal 2014.

Johnson asked for a motion to approve the bottom line budget for FY13. Duncan Phyfe motioned to accept the FY13 budget of \$12,799,171 and was seconded by Belden Divito. Motion was unanimous.

A short discussion followed on the proposed school agreement changes and if there would be an article on the ATM warrant. Briggs noted that it probably wouldn't be ready until the fall but that there was a place holder on the ATM warrant at this time.

Briggs asked the Board to also review the Water and Sewer Budgets for FY13 noting that the only real differences were the 3% increase in the salary and wages lines and under the Water budget, the additional \$40,000 in the filtration account.

Duncan Phyfe motioned to accept the Water Department budget as presented and was seconded by Gail Dumont. Motion was unanimous.

Joe Oliveira motioned to accept the Sewer Department budget as presented and was seconded by Gail Dumont. Motion was unanimous.

Bill Johnson motioned to support the purchase of a chair, at a cost of \$405, to be presented to John MacMillan for his many years of service to the Town. Joe Oliveira seconded the motion and it was unanimous.

A motion was made by Duncan Phyfe to approve the October 19, 2011 minutes and this was seconded by Meredith Fagan. Joe Oliveira and Jamie Piedrafite abstained.

At 9:13 p.m. Bill Johnson adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Assistant to the Town Administrator